

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 4-25 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 4-6, 9, 11, 12, 18, 19 and 22 are amended and claims 23-25 are added. No new matter has been added.

Support for the amendments is found, for example, in paragraph [0015] of the Applicants' disclosure. Specifically, the claims are amended to recite "actively run" incipient-folding rollers which is supported, for example, in paragraph [0015], lines 3-5. Claim 1 is further amended to recite "in a first direction towards the actively run incipient-folding rollers" which is supported in paragraph [0015], lines 1-2, and Figs. 1a and 2a. Claim 9 is further amended to recite that the at least two removal rollers are arranged on a side of the actively run incipient-folding rollers opposite the knife, which is supported in paragraph [0015], lines 13-18, and Figs. 1a-3b.

Support for new claims 23 and 24 is found, for example, in paragraph [0017].

Support for new claim 25 is found, for example, in paragraph [0015].

For the following reasons, Applicants request reconsideration.

I. REPLY TO REJECTIONS

On page 2, item 2 of the Office Action, claims 9, 12, 15-16, 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over EP0034921 to Pitman. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that Pitman fails to disclose an apparatus for folding sheets having at least two actively run incipient-folding rollers ..., and having at least two removal rollers ... which are arranged on a side of the actively run incipient-folding rollers opposite the knife, as recited in claim 9.

Fig. 2 of Pitman shows a folder saddle or blade 4 slidable in both the vertical and horizontal directions by a crank arm 5 connected to a shaft 5B. Located above the folder saddle/blade 4 are horizontal parallel rollers 2. Located to the side of the apparatus are crease forming booklet ejecting rollers 3 (page 4, lines 1-17 of Pitman). As shown in Fig. 1 and

disclosed on page 5, line 14 of Pitman, the rollers 2, 2 are spaced so that a gap exists between the rollers 2, 2 to accommodate the blade 4. Pitman discloses that an electric motor 8 drives the shaft 5B by way of gear box 9, shaft 9A, belt 10, shaft 6A, and a magnetic clutch to move the blade 4. The electric motor 8 also drives a pair of crease forming and booklet ejecting rollers 3, 3 (page 4, lines 12-17).

Pitman specifically discloses that it is the combined action of the blade 4 and the rollers 2, 2 that folds the group of sheets along a central fold line to form the booklet (page 5, lines 15-17). Nowhere in Pitman is it disclosed that the rollers 2, 2 are actively run, i.e., connected to a motor or are able to rotate independently of the insertion of the blade in the gap. In other words, in Pitman, the rollers 2, 2 rotate because a blade 4 is inserted into the gap, and the friction between the sheets and the rollers 2, 2 causes rotation of the rollers 2, 2. In contrast, claim 9 recites that the incipient-folding rollers are actively run, i.e., rotate independently of their interaction with the blade, which is patentably distinguishable.

Further, Pitman fails to disclose that the at least two removal rollers are arranged on a side of the actively run incipient-folding rollers opposite the knife. Instead, Fig. 2 of Pitman clearly shows that the crease forming booklet ejecting rollers 3 are located on the same side of the horizontal parallel rollers 2 as the folder saddle/blade 4.

In view of the above, claim 9 is patentable over the applied reference. Claims 12, 15, 16, 18 and 19, which depend from claim 9, are likewise patentable over the applied reference for at least the reasons discussed above and for the additional features they recite. For example, there is no disclosure in Pitman of a stop for the sheets, as recited in claim 15 or the distance of the removal rollers from the feed plane, as recited in claim 16. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

On page 2, item 4 of the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 13, 17 and 20-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Pitman. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that Pitman fails to disclose a process for folding sheets, comprising feeding the sheet to at least two actively run incipient-folding rollers by a rectilinear knife, which can be moved perpendicularly to the feed plane in a first direction towards the actively run incipient-folding rollers, ... and conveying the folded sheet further in the first direction by the actively run incipient-folding rollers perpendicularly to the feed plane..., as recited in claim 1.

Firstly, corresponding to the discussion above for claim 9, Pitman fails to disclose at least two actively run incipient-folding rollers. Instead, Pitman discloses horizontal parallel rollers 2 which rotate based on the action of the folder saddle/blade 4. Consequently, Pitman fails to disclose feeding the sheet to at least two actively run incipient-folding rollers, as recited in claim 1.

Secondly, Pitman fails to disclose conveying the folded sheet further in the first direction by the actively run incipient-folding rollers perpendicularly to the feed plane, as recited in claim 1. The first direction is the direction which is perpendicular to the feed plane. In Pitman, the horizontal parallel rollers do not convey the folded sheet further in the first direction but instead, the horizontal parallel rollers are rotated by the blade 4 only when the blade 4 enters the gap formed between the horizontal parallel rollers (Fig. 2 of Pitman). The sheet in Pitman is further moved by the blade 4 towards the two staples 1, 1 instead of the horizontal parallel rollers 2, 2. That is, "folder blade drives the group of sheets upwardly in a single continuous motion in a vertical plane" (page 5, line 26 - page 6, line 1 of Pitman).

In view of the above disclosure, Pitman fails to anticipate, or render obvious, all of the features of claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable over the applied reference.

Claims 2, 4, 7, 8, 13, 17 and 20-22, which depend from claim 1, are likewise patentable over the applied reference for at least the reasons discussed above and for the additional features they recite. For example, Pitman fails to disclose a saddle aligned in the direction of the fold, as recited in claim 2. Instead, Pitman discloses a combined folder saddle/blade 4.

Pitman also does not disclose the positioning of the lateral borders of the folded booklet, the feature of claim 4.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

On page 3, item 5 of the Office Action, claims 5, 6 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Pitman in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,410,170 to Wertheimer et al. (hereinafter "Wertheimer"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Pitman fails to disclose, or render obvious, all of the features of claim 1, from which claims 5 and 6 depend. Further, as discussed above, Pitman fails to disclose all of the features of claim 9, from which claim 11 depends. There is no suggestion in Pitman which renders obvious all of the features of claim 9. Furthermore, Wertheimer fails to overcome the above discussed deficiencies in Pitman. Therefore, claims 5, 6 and 11 are also patentable over the applied references for at least the reasons discussed above and for the additional features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

On page 4, item 6 of the Office Action, claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Pitman in view of EP0846573 to Meratti. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Pitman fails to disclose, or render obvious, the features of claim 9, from which claim 10 depends. As Meratti fails to overcome the discussed deficiencies in Pitman, the combination fails to render obvious claim 9. Claim 10 is therefore patentable over the applied references for at least the reasons stated above and for the additional features it recites. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

On page 4, item 7 of the Office Action, claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Pitman in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,779,232 to Ochsner. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Pitman fails to disclose, or render obvious, the features of claim 9, from which claim 14 depends. As Ochsner fails to overcome the discussed deficiencies of Pitman, claim 14 is patentable over the applied references at least on the basis of its dependence from claim 9, and for the additional features it recites. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

II. CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated above, Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of claims 1, 2, 4-22 and the allowance of new claims 23-25 are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time
Amendment Transmittal

Date: April 30, 2004

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